

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 12 - 17.

1. A system[,] for providing information to electronic storage media of system users, said system comprising:

a central computer comprising a central information storage bank;

at least one local unit communicatively coupled to said central computer, said local unit comprising a memory for storing, in electronic form, information transmitted to said unit from said central computer, and a processor for controlling transfer of information stored in said unit to the electronic storage media of system users, said local unit [being] configured to encrypt the information when the information is to be transferred to the electronic storage media [of system users so that the information transferred to a first system user storage media can only be accessed by the first system user and other authorized users, if any].

2. A system in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said local unit is configured to transmit, to said central computer, information related to [the] a number of copies of an item of information transferred from said local unit to [users] the electronic storage media.

3. A system in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said local unit further comprises a memory interface [which is] configured to [receive and] interface with [a user memory] the electronic storage [unit] media, and said local unit is further configured to utilize information stored on [said user's memory] the electronic storage [unit together with information stored on the memory of the local unit] media to [finally] encrypt information [downloaded] transferred to the [user memory] electronic storage [unit so that the information after being down loaded is only readable by a specific user's reading hardware] media.

4. A system in accordance with Claim 3 wherein the information stored on [said user's memory unit] the electronic storage media comprises a personal signature code number and serial number.

5. A system in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said local unit is further configured to [download] transfer to the electronic storage media data which is indicative of a period of time during which access by the user of the information is authorized.

6. Apparatus[,] for providing information from a central computer to a memory unit of a user, said apparatus comprising:

a first interface configured to be communicatively coupled to [a] the central computer;

a book bank memory for storing, in electronic form, information transmitted to said first interface by the central computer;

a second interface configured to receive [a] the user's memory unit;

a processor for controlling transfer of information stored in said book bank memory to the user's memory unit; and

encryption means for dynamically encrypting information transferred through said second interface to the users' memory units.

7. Apparatus in accordance with Claim 6 wherein the central computer includes a central transactional database and said apparatus further [comprising] comprises a fileserver for controlling transmission, to [a] the central transactional database, of information related to the number of copies of an item of information transferred through said second interface to the users' memory units.

8. Apparatus in accordance with Claim 7 wherein said fileserver stores data related to the information transferred from said book bank memory to users' memory units in a manner so

as to enable identification of each item of information transferred to [a particular] each user's memory unit.

9. Apparatus in accordance with Claim 6 wherein said processor is further configured to transfer to the user's memory unit data related to [the] a time at which information is transferred from said book bank memory to the user's memory unit.

10. Apparatus in accordance with Claim 6 wherein a personal signature code number and serial number are stored in the user's memory unit and wherein said encryption means is configured to read, through said second interface and from the user's memory unit, [a] the personal signature code number and serial number [stored in the user's memory unit].

11. A system[,] for transferring information to storage media of system users, said system comprising:

a central information bank for storing electronic copies of information;

a central transactional database for storing [information] data related [information] to transactions;

at least one local unit comprising a first unit communicatively coupled to said central information bank for receiving information transmitted from [the] said central information bank, said first unit further comprising a memory storage for storing information transmitted to said first unit by said central information bank[;], said local unit further

C1 comprising a fileserver coupled to said first unit [and to said central transactional database] for transmitting to said central transactional database information related to transactions performed by said first unit.

C2 ¹²
18. A system in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said local unit is further configured to [download] transfer to the system user storage media data indicative of a period of time during which access by the user [of] to the information is authorized.

[Please add the following new claims.

C3 ¹³
19. A system in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said local unit is configured to perform at least some point-of-sale functions including transferring information received from said central information bank to the user storage media.

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20. A system in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said local unit is configured to perform at least some point-of-rental functions including transferring information received from said central information bank to the user storage media and transferring to the system user storage media data indicative of a period of time during which access by the user to the information is authorized.

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~~21~~. A system in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said local unit is configured to perform at least some subsystem functions including restricting duplication and transmission of data.

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~~22~~. A system in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said local unit is configured to perform at least some promotional delivery system functions including displaying promotional information.

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~~23~~. A system in accordance with Claim 11 wherein said local unit further comprises a memory interface configured to interface with the system user's storage media, and said local unit is configured to utilize information stored on said user's storage media to encrypt the information.

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~~24~~. A system in accordance with Claim ~~23~~ wherein the information stored on the user's storage media comprises a personal signature code number and serial number.

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~~25~~. A system for providing information to electronic storage media of system users, said system comprising:

a central computer comprising a central information storage bank;

at least one local unit communicatively coupled to said central computer, said local unit comprising a memory for storing, in electronic form, information transmitted to said unit from said central computer, and a processor for controlling transfer of information stored in said unit to the electronic

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30. A system in accordance with Claim ¹⁹~~25~~ wherein said local unit is configured to perform at least some promotional delivery system functions including displaying promotional information.

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31. A system in accordance with Claim ¹⁹~~25~~ wherein said local unit is configured to transmit, to said central computer, information related to a number of copies of an item of information transferred from said local unit to the electronic storage media.

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32. A system in accordance with Claim ¹⁹~~25~~ wherein said local unit is further configured to transfer to the electronic storage media data which is indicative of a period of time during which access by the user of the information is authorized.

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33. Apparatus for providing transferring information to a memory unit of a user, said apparatus comprising:

a book bank memory for storing, in electronic form, information which may be selected by the user for transfer to the user's memory unit;

a memory unit interface configured to be coupled to the user's memory unit;

a processor for controlling transfer of information stored in said book bank memory to the user's memory unit, said processor programmed to, for a first transaction, transfer information to the user's memory unit and, for a second transaction, transfer to the user's memory unit data indicative

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storage media of system users, said local unit configured to encrypt the information when the information is to be transferred to the electronic storage media, said local unit configured to encrypt the information utilizing information stored on said user's storage media.

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26. A system in accordance with Claim ¹⁹~~25~~ wherein the information stored on the user's storage media comprises a personal signature code number and serial number.


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27. A system in accordance with Claim ¹⁹~~25~~ wherein said local unit is configured to perform at least some point-of-sale functions including transferring information received from said central information bank to the user storage media.

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28. A system in accordance with Claim ¹⁹~~25~~ wherein said local unit is configured to perform at least some point-of-rental functions including transferring information received from said central information bank to the user storage media and transferring to the system user storage media data indicative of a period of time during which access by the user to the information is authorized.

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29. A system in accordance with Claim ¹⁹~~25~~ wherein said local unit is configured to perform at least some subsystem functions including restricting duplication and transmission of data.

of a period of time during which access by the user to the information is authorized; and

an encryption unit for dynamically encrypting information transferred through said memory unit interface to the user's memory unit, said encryption unit configured to encrypt the information, utilizing data stored on the user's memory unit, when the information is to be transferred to the memory unit.

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~~34~~. Apparatus in accordance with Claim ²⁷~~33~~ wherein said apparatus is part of a communications network including a central computer, said apparatus communicatively coupled to the central computer.

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~~35~~. Apparatus in accordance with Claim ²⁸~~34~~ wherein said apparatus is configured to transmit, to the central computer, information related to a number of copies of an item of information transferred from said apparatus to the user's memory unit.

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~~36~~. Apparatus in accordance with Claim ²⁷~~35~~ wherein the data stored on the user's memory unit comprises a personal signature code number.
